



DIVISIONS
ENERGY
GAS AND OIL
GEOLOGY AND MINERAL RESOURCES
MINED LAND RECLAMATION
MINERAL MINING
MINES
ADMINISTRATION

COMMONWEALTH OF VIRGINIA

Department of Mines, Minerals and Energy

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Request for Information

Virginia Offshore Wind Data Gathering Opportunity

- Specific Authority:** These funds were authorized and appropriated by the Virginia General Assembly during their 2013 legislative session.
- Request Issued By:** Virginia Department of Mines, Minerals and Energy (DMME)
- Request Issued:** September 27, 2013
- Responses Due:** Responses shall be received at the e-mail address identified below no later than 2:00 p.m. on November 8, 2013. Any proposals received after 2:00 p.m. on November 8, 2013 will be deleted without being read.
- Response Process:** The Responder must submit **1 complete electronic copy** of the entire response to:
Al.Christopher@dmme.virginia.gov
- General Questions:** Please direct inquiries to:
Al Christopher, Director – Energy Division
VA Department of Mines, Minerals and Energy
804-692-3216
Al.Christopher@dmme.virginia.gov
- Answers to Questions:** General questions submitted above [will be answered here.](#)

Introduction

This Request for Information (RFI) seeks input on how the Virginia Department of Mines, Minerals, and Energy (DMME) should best apply approximately \$850,000 in state funding that has been legislatively appropriated for the following purpose:

“to leverage private and federal funding for increased data gathering to give Virginia an advantage over competing states in attracting the offshore wind industry to Virginia.”

This amount is being considered as the state’s cost share contribution to a collaborative project that could be funded by other entities as well, including the federal government and private industry. The DMME followed this same approach last year when it provided a contribution of \$300,000 in state funds towards a regional ocean geological study and ocean survey, which had a total collaborative dollar value of \$750,000.

Similarly, \$100,000 in state funds were contributed as cost share towards Phase I of the Virginia Offshore Wind Technology Advancement Project (VOWTAP) to build test turbines and validate remote metocean and environmental monitoring instrumentation data. This project has a total collaborative dollar value of approximately \$5 million.

Leveraging Virginia’s Leading Position in U.S. Offshore Wind Development

In addition to sharing in the cost, the DMME also will be able to offer space within the areas covered by two pending research lease applications in federal waters off of the Virginia shore. As shown in Figure 1, these research lease areas are located along the borders of the Commercial Wind Energy Area, for which Dominion Virginia Power has been awarded development rights for its high bid of \$1.6 million in the Bureau of Energy Management (BOEM) lease auction held on September 4, 2013.

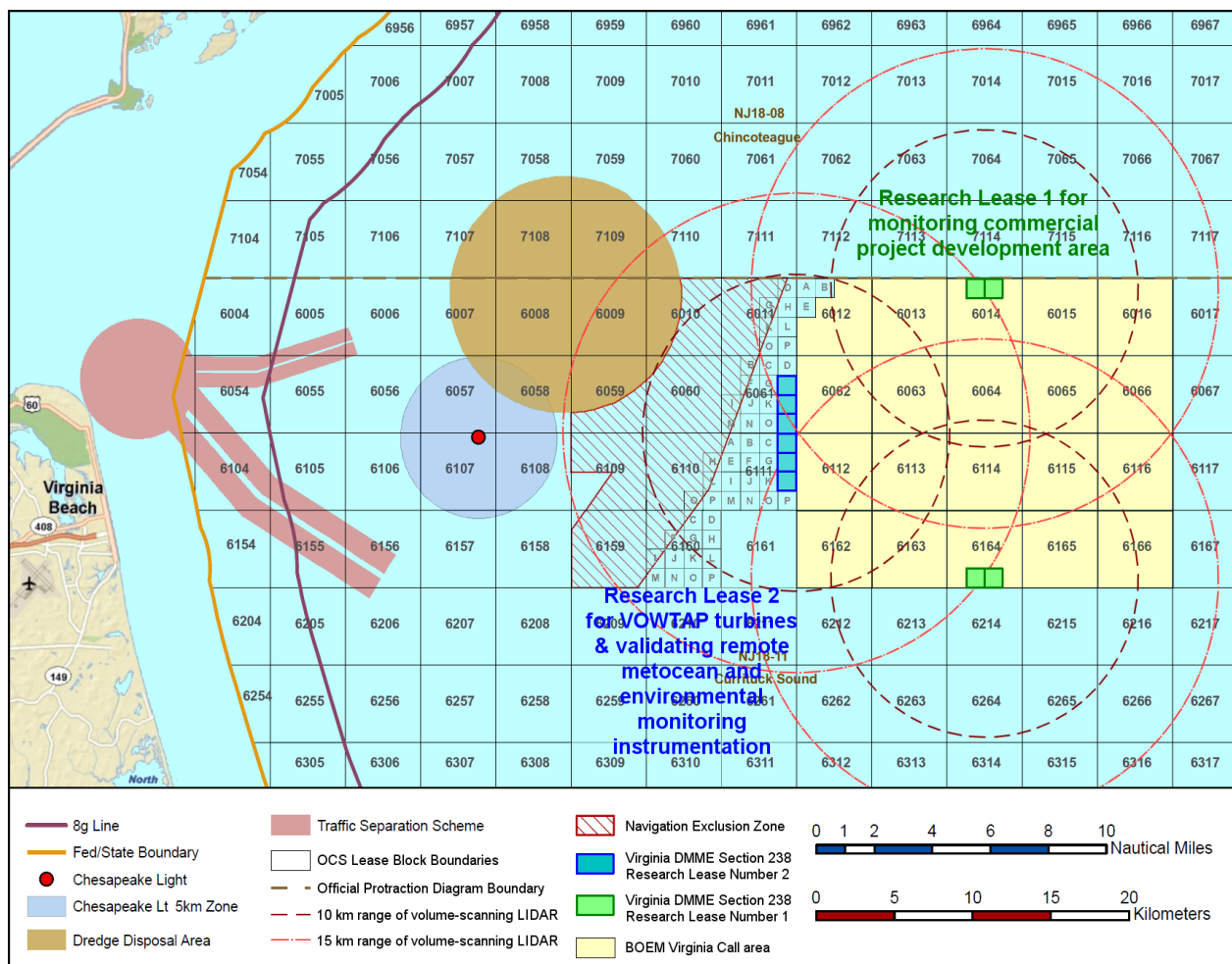


Figure 1. Map of research leases and the commercial wind energy call area in federal waters off Virginia.

Virginia Offshore Wind Coalition Surveys

In May 2013, the Virginia Offshore Wind (VOW) Coalition opened an on-line survey of its members and of the general public to solicit ideas about how best to invest a state funding contribution. The survey asked the following questions:

1. When considering possible uses for the funds, the high costs of working offshore, and the limited funds available, how do you think the funds would be best spent?
 - Additional Site Characterization Hydrographic Surveys
 - Current Profiling
 - Passive Acoustic Monitoring
 - Wind Profiling
 - Geotechnical Sampling
 - Other

Please explain your recommendations in detail. Remember that the goal is to make the Virginia Wind Energy Area (WEA) more attractive to potential developers and decrease project installation time.

2. Do you have ideas or suggestions that you feel would increase the value of the WEA other than metocean data collection?
3. What is the most important effort you feel the Commonwealth could make that would stimulate both the local economy and the value of the WEA?
4. The development of an offshore wind industry has the potential to positively affect the local economy. How do you see you and/or your company being involved in this industry?

The following is a brief summary of some sample responses to the on-line survey questions:

1. This Question 1 response illustrates the broad support for funds to be used for advancing site characterization:

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Investment in offshore met platform should create a viable and stable structure that can be used for multiple purposes - Measurement of wind resource from a reliable platform, sampling, site characterization and observation of dynamic geological factors such as scouring and migration on offshore structures, and observation of avian and mid-ocean conditions and effects.

2. This Question 2 response recommends leveraging the funds to put Hampton Roads “on the map” as an industrial hub of the East Coast offshore wind supply chain:

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Port logistical studies. Hampton Roads boasts the most impressive harbor and port facilities in the world and that needs to be "put on the map" for the wind industry, particularly foreign leaders who have the expertise to develop offshore but may be unaware of Virginia's advantages.

3. These responses to Question 3 also have helped to shape this RFI:

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Investment in supply chain through incentives and funding will provide necessary capabilities for Virginia wind energy area, while positioning Virginia marine industries and manufacturers to compete for supply chain opportunities for the greater global marine energy and construction market.

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Step One - establish the science, which requires instrumentation, which requires supporting structure. Fund this effort and tap the port resources to fabricate and construct same.

Intended Objectives of this RFI

This RFI is intended to solicit information that will assist the DMME to identify a project or projects that achieve the following specific objectives, which are consistent with the Virginia General Assembly's appropriation language and with the VOW Coalition member survey results and the associated public comments quoted above:

- Objective 1 - Identification of private industry products and services for gathering the types of data needed to "give Virginia an advantage over competing states in attracting the offshore wind industry to Virginia." Such products or services could include, but would not be limited to, metocean measurement or environmental monitoring technologies that can be used to characterize not only the Virginia offshore wind energy area, but that also could be marketed for site assessment in **any** of the offshore wind energy areas along the Atlantic coast that are mapped in Figure 2.
- Objective 2 - Identification of private industry business concepts that would bundle the products and services identified in Objective 1 into a dedicated offshore wind supply chain business based in Virginia, which would market this bundle to offshore wind lease-holders throughout the Atlantic region mapped in Figure 2. If this bundle of products and services falls within the scope of activities for which BOEM already has determined a "Finding of No Significant Impact" in its Environmental Assessment (EA) for Mid-Atlantic lease issuance and site characterization activities, then it is more likely to gain advantage in our target offshore wind market. This EA can be downloaded at www.boem.gov/uploadedFiles/BOEM/Renewable_Energy_Program/Smart_from_the_Start/Mid-Atlantic_Final_EA_012012.pdf.
- Objective 3 - Identification of government matching funds or in-kind activities that can be contributed by other Virginia state agencies, federal agencies, and local governments, leveraging DMME's state funding contribution and research lease space to achieve maximum "first mover advantage" for a business or businesses established along the conceptual lines identified in Objective 2.
- Objective 4 - Identification of matching funds or in-kind activities that can be contributed by non-government organizations already active in gathering, analyzing, and/or disseminating offshore data, including but not limited to metocean or environmental data.
- Objective 5 - Identification of matching funds or in-kind activities that can be contributed by private industry, including but not limited to offshore wind project developers and wind-related equipment manufacturers.

- Objective 6 - Identification of potential operators for Research Lease 1, as mapped in Figure 1. This could be a university or other non-profit entity, a commercial business, or a consortium, which would be designated by the DMME as part of its Research Lease (RL) 1 agreement with BOEM. This is consistent with DMME's intended development of an operating agreement with a designated operator for RL 2.

In the **"Requested Information by Objective"** section at the end of this RFI, the responders will be able to address any or all of the six topic areas noted above.

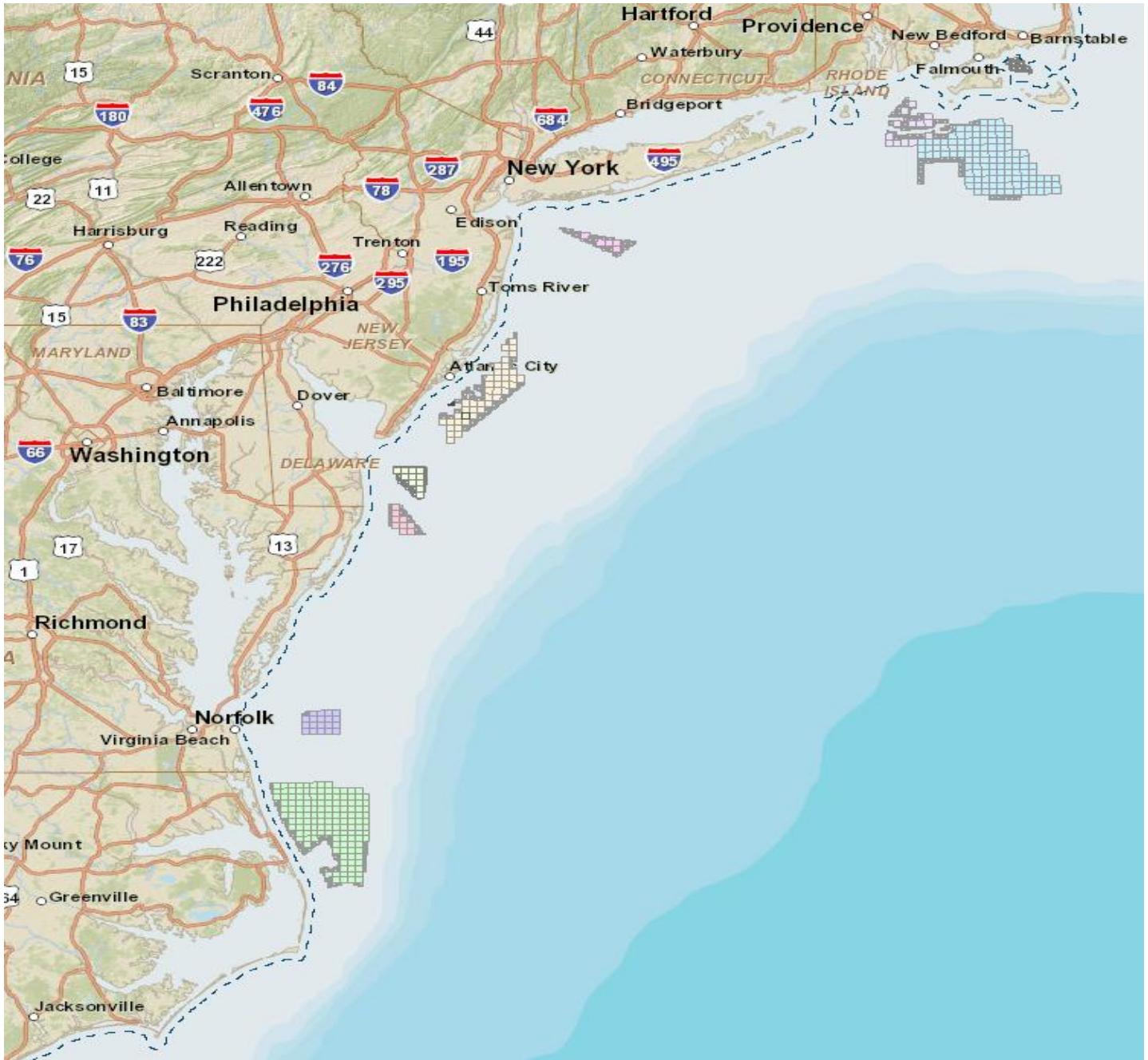


Figure 2. Map of offshore wind energy areas between Cape Hatteras, NC and Cape Cod, MA, which represent the Atlantic offshore wind market of 20 to 30 GW of potential installed turbine capacity.

RFI Guidelines

Purpose

The information collected by this RFI will be used to establish baseline market information and for internal DMME planning for wind energy development. Interested parties who might respond to this RFI could include, but are not limited to:

- Wind energy equipment manufacturers of metocean and environmental monitoring technologies, including sensors, data acquisition systems, data analysis hardware and software, data product dissemination and display services, numerical modeling and forecasting services, and fabricators of buoys or other instrumentation support platforms.
- Offshore wind developers, including independent power producers and regulated utilities.
- Federal, state, and local government agencies.
- Private, non-commercial, non-government organizations.
- Entrepreneurs and investors in new business creation.

The sole purpose of this Request for Information (RFI) is to gain input that will enable the DMME to identify potential products, services, contributors, and collaborators for achieving the objectives stated above.

Disclaimer and Important Notes

This is an RFI issued solely for information and program planning purposes. This RFI does not constitute a formal solicitation for proposals or abstracts. Your response to this notice will be treated as informational only. Responses to this RFI are not offers and will not be accepted by the DMME to form a binding contract. The DMME will not provide reimbursement for costs incurred in responding to this RFI.

Proprietary Information

The DMME strongly discourages the submission of business-sensitive, proprietary, or otherwise confidential information as it cannot guarantee that such information will not become public knowledge.

Disclaimers

This RFI does not constitute a solicitation for specific project proposals. Responses to the RFI will be treated as informational only and will not be viewed as a binding commitment for the respondent to develop or pursue the project or ideas discussed. This is not a request for proposals and the DMME will not accept applications for financial assistance or financial incentives under this RFI.

The DMME may or may not decide at a later date to issue a request for proposals or another type of solicitation based on consideration of the input received from this RFI, but there is no guarantee that future funding opportunities or other activities will be undertaken as a result of this RFI. Because information received in response to this RFI may be used to structure future funding opportunities and/or may otherwise be made available to the public, respondents are strongly advised to **not** include any information in their responses that might be considered business-sensitive, proprietary, or otherwise confidential.

In order to avoid a conflict with future funding opportunities, the DMME will not reply to any respondent questions or contacts received after the closure of the submission period for this RFI. Respondents are advised that the DMME is under no obligation to acknowledge receipt of the information received or provide feedback to respondents with respect to any information submitted under this RFI. Responses to this RFI do not bind the DMME to any further actions related to this topic.

Questions about this RFI

All questions regarding the content of this RFI must be submitted on or before 5 pm on October 25 to the email address provided above with the email subject line "RFI Question." Questions (worded exactly as they are when submitted to DMME) and answers will be published on the DMME web page where this RFI is posted. Questions received after October 25 will not be answered.

Detailed Response Instructions

Responses to this RFI must be submitted via email to Al.Christopher@dmme.virginia.gov by 2:00 PM Eastern Time on November 8, 2013. Responses should include a cover page with the submitting organization's name and contact person with phone, email, and postal address; a 1-page executive summary; and a narrative not to exceed 6 pages.

Responses must be submitted as either a Microsoft Word document or Adobe PDF file attached to an email with the subject line: "Virginia Offshore Wind Data Gathering Opportunity (insert name or organization in parentheses)." One inch margins and 11- point or larger font should be used with either single or 1.15 spacing.

Requested Information by Objective

The DMME seeks input on the concept of establishing an offshore wind supply chain business based in Virginia that would market products and services for metocean and/or environmental characterization of large offshore wind energy areas (WEAs) throughout the Atlantic region. This would give Virginia "first mover" advantage in establishing the beginnings of a dedicated offshore wind supply chain that takes advantage of the maritime facilities and unlimited air draft transit to the open Atlantic Ocean from its ports. Such a business would be able to utilize pending DMME research leases to first characterize the Virginia WEA, thereby accelerating development of Virginia's offshore wind energy resource while at the same time obtaining a full-scale, full-duration demonstration of its products and services.

The DMME invites comments and suggestions on the above concept or any other concept that is consistent with the objectives of this RFI. Responses may be in the form of narration, tables, graphs or any other format that clearly and concisely communicates your responses. Responses may address, but are not limited to, some or all of the following topics, as tied to the numbered objectives listed on pp. 4-5 of this RFI:

- Objective 1 Topic – Discuss Private Industry Products and Services
- Objective 2 Topic – Discuss Topics for Private Industry Business Concepts
- Objective 3 Topic – Discuss Government Matching Funds or In-kind Activities
- Objective 4 Topic – Discuss Private, Non-commercial Matching Funds or In-kind Activities
- Objective 5 Topic – Discuss Commercial Matching Funds or In-kind Activities
- Objective 6 Topic – Discuss Potential Operators for Research Lease 1